

LINCOLN BOYHOOD NATIONAL MEMORIAL:
CLIPPINGS

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MEMORIALS

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Indiana Memorials

Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial Clippings

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

HISTORICAL PLACES AND MARKERS

Frank C. Ball, of Muncie, on June 6, presented to Governor Harry G. Leslie for the State of Indiana, a deed to approximately thirty acres of land in which is the site of the cabin of Thomas Lincoln in what is now Lincoln City, Spencer County. Here Abraham Lincoln lived from the age of seven to twenty-one. This land will be added to the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial Park, which, under the direction of the Indiana Lincoln Union, is becoming one of the country's greatest Lincoln shrines. Mr. Ball and the Ball brothers' families, by this timely generosity, have endeared their name to the state and, indeed, to the whole nation. The gift is one of the greatest services ever rendered to the development of historical memorials in this state.

THE LINCOLN UNION

The Lincoln Union has completed its organization for the development of plans and the securing of funds for a great Lincoln shrine at Lincoln City. The state has been divided into three sections, southern, central, and northern, with sectional and county chairmen, and Frank C. Ball of Muncie has accepted the chairmanship for the whole state canvass. Thomas E. Hibben of Indianapolis has been chosen as architect for the service building to be erected on the grounds at some distance from the grave of Nancy Hanks Lincoln. A beautiful pamphlet has been published containing views of the most important Lincoln memorials and monuments in the United States and giving drawings of the plans proposed for the service building at Lincoln City by Mr. Hibben, together with a description of the ideas which Mr. Hibben has sought to embody in his plans.

Mrs. Ann Studebaker Carlisle of South Bend is president of the Union and Colonel Richard Lieber, director of the Department of Conservation, is chairman of the executive committee.

TWENTYFIVE POINTS OF HISTORICAL INTEREST.

ONE MILE



Kennedy Signs Bill To Create National Lincoln Park In State

(Picture On Page 1.)

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Kennedy signed Monday a bill creating Indiana's first national park and was immediately invited to help dedicate it.

The bill provides for a 200-acre Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in Spencer County, Ind., where Abraham Lincoln lived from the time he was 7 until he was 21.

President Kennedy signed the bill with half a dozen pens and then gave them out as souvenirs to those looking on. They included:

Sen. Vance Hartke, D-Ind.; Rep. Winfield K. Denton, D-Ind.; William H. Koch, Santa Claus, Ind.; Roy T. Combs, president of the Indiana Lincoln Foundation, and Mrs. Isadora Skora, a Lincoln scholar from Evansville.

Shortly after the signing, the Hoosiers invited the President to help dedicate the memorial either late this spring or in early summer.

Included in the national memorial will be the present Nancy Hanks Lincoln State Memorial — about 89 acres of hill country. The state memorial includes the grave of Nancy Hanks Lincoln — Abe's mother— and the site of the Lincoln cabin.

The federal government is expected to buy about 57 acres of the original Lincoln farm now held by private owners and an adjacent 23 acres.

The bill calls for expenditure of \$1 million — but no more than \$75,000 for acquisition of land. However, no money has been appropriated and none is contained in President Kennedy's 1963 fiscal budget. Unless the National Park Service asks for a supplemental appropriation, the funds won't be available until the next fiscal year.

State officials, however, say they expect the government to go ahead and dedicate the park and develop it as funds become available.

Ideal Time For A Lincoln Road

1962

KENTUCKIANS CAN share with their Hoosier neighbors a glow of pride in the dedication of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial park in Spencer County, Indiana. For Lincoln was shaped and formed in Kentucky, his birthplace, as well as Indiana and Illinois. The park is Indiana's first national one, and it is highly appropriate that it should be dedicated to the memory of Abraham Lincoln who, as Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall said, "belongs to all the people of America."

Lincoln grew from boyhood to manhood on the gentle hills of Spencer County, Indiana. His mother, Nancy Hanks, is buried there. In his father's cabin there his education began. The only book in the cabin was the family Bible, which he read for many lonely hours. He borrowed and read everything else he could get his hands on—*Tommy's Progress*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Aesop's Fables*, and *Crimshaw's History of the United States*. When he wasn't reading he was helping his family hack out an existence in what was then a veritable wilderness. The 80 acres his father owned in Spencer County, despite 14 years of improvements he made on it, never paid very well, and in 1830 Thomas Lincoln sold it for \$125 and took his family to Illinois. But by this time Abe was 21, 14 formative years behind him. In these years the loneliness, the silence of labor—~~which~~ ^{which} alone left their mark. "Silence," Carl Sandburg writes, "found him for his own. In the making of him, the element of silence was immense."

A Tri-State Asset

The dedication of the new Lincoln shrine in Indiana was, in a way, but a beginning. More land is to be acquired. Only part of the Lincoln farm is now in the park area. The Indiana Lincoln Foundation expects to raise funds for the construction of an international classroom and World Lincoln Library in the memorial areas. To us, one of the most intriguing byproducts of the new park dedication could be a scenic parkway linking the Lincoln country of Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois. Secretary Udall said he hopes to see this come to pass. And why not?

The parkway could wend its way from the Lincoln homestead area in Kentucky's Washington County, to Hodgenville, where Lincoln was born, over a proposed new bridge across the Ohio River to Cannelton, Ind., into Spencer County and thence to Illinois. It could be a natural tourist attraction for the three states. With a sympathetic Secretary of the Interior in office, now is the time for the three states to join together and work to turn this conception into reality.

Chairman Named For Lincoln Rite

WASHINGTON (AP) — Mrs. Thalia S. Woods of Gentryville, Ind., will serve as chairman of the state committee for the dedication of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in Spencer County, Indiana, July 10.

Appointment of Mrs. Woods, an expert in organization and public service fields, was announced by Sen. Vance Hartke, D-Ind., and Rep. Winfield Denton, D-Ind., co-chairman of the national committee for the dedicatory program.

Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall will be the principal speaker.

Invitations to the program have gone to all Indiana, Kentucky and Illinois members of congress, Lincoln scholars and civic and business leaders throughout Indiana.

Lincoln Memorial Dedication Tuesday; Dr. Warren Speaker

Dr. Louis A. Warren, head of the Lincoln Life Foundation, will be one of the principal speakers at the dedication Tuesday of Indiana's first national monument, a memorial to Abraham Lincoln, at Lincoln City.

Dr. Warren, an authority on the Civil War president, will trace Lincoln's formative years spent in Spencer County, where Lincoln City is located.

Honorary chairman of the pro-

gram will be Carl Sandburg, poet and Lincoln authority. It was still undetermined last night whether he would be able to attend the ceremonies.

Gov. Matthew Welsh will present the state park and Lincoln Boyhood Memorial to Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall at 2 p.m. Tuesday in front of the Memorial Building on Ind. 162.

Master of ceremonies will be Sen. Vance Hartke, D-Ind., one of the sponsors of a bill which made the state park a national shrine. Other congressmen from Indiana, Kentucky and Illinois are expected to attend.

Music of the Civil War era will be presented by the Tell City High School band.

Others to be present will include Conrad Wirth, supervisor of the National Park Service which will maintain the monument; Lt. Gov. Richard O. Ristine; Roy T. Combs, president of the Indiana Lincoln Foundation; William A. Koch of Santa Claus, a foundation board member, and George Palmer, regional director of the park service.

Donald E. Foltz, state conservation director, will confer with park service officials Monday on boundary lines for the monument.

The shrine will include the Lincoln Memorial Building; the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial, burial place of Lincoln's mother, and the Lincoln family's cabin site.

It will cover about 140 acres of the present state park along with another 60 acres. Fringes around the state land, including a camping site and cottages, will stay under state control.

ACCEPTED BY UDALL

THE JOURNAL - GAZETTE
Wednesday, July 11, 1962 21

Lincoln Shrine New U.S. Memorial

LINCOLN CITY, Ind. (AP) — Indiana's first national memorial—the boyhood home of Abraham Lincoln—was welcomed into the national park system Tuesday by Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall.

The Cabinet officer, speaking at the dedication of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial, said Lincoln's experiences growing up in Southern Indiana may have built the foundation for future greatness.

"The Indiana years may well have been crucial in Lincoln's subsequent career," Udall said. "The move from Kentucky to Indiana was transitional; it softened and modified his Southern heritage but it did not erase that heritage.

"Southern Indiana was in Lincoln's youth—as it remains today—a meeting ground between North and South."

Gov. Matthew E. Welsh presented the memorial to the federal government on behalf of the state.

Udall and Conrad Wirth, National Parks Service director, headed a list of Washington dignitaries at the ceremony which included Sen. Homer E. Capehart, R-Ind.; Sen. Vance Hartke, D-Ind. and Rep. Winfield K. Denton, D-Ind.

Hartke and Denton, co-sponsors of the legislation making a national memorial of the Lincoln tract, were described by Udall as having "played midwives' roles in the establishment of this memorial."

Hartke said in another address that the failures Lincoln experienced in his career can provide a valuable lesson for everyone.

"More than most men who aspire to public office, Lincoln was to know bitter disappointment and defeat," Hartke said.

"We see too few today in the public arena—and in more orthodox pursuits—who learned so well the lesson evident in Lincoln's career. Fewer and fewer, it seems, realize consecutive defeats

may be a stepping-stone to ultimate winning . . ."

The new national shrine in-

cludes the state's Lincoln Memorial Building; the grave of Lincoln's mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, and the site of the cabin where the future Civil War President grew up.

Retired School Executives Seek *Journal Gazette 10-4-62* Funds For Lincoln Memorial

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Twenty-five retired school executives will set out Monday to seek support of Hoosier pupils and their teachers in a plan to build a \$1.5 million education memorial on the site of Abraham Lincoln's boyhood home.

The Indiana Lincoln Foundation is sponsoring the project and reported encouragement already has come from many school and civic groups.

H. Audley Woosley, executive secretary, said tentative plans for the memorial call for facilities for Indiana and foreign students interested in studying Lincoln history. An auditorium and a museum also are planned.

The memorial would be built on or near the new national Lincoln Boyhood Memorial and Lincoln State Park in Spencer County.

The foundation has hired 25 retired school superintendents and principals to stir up interest in the memorial project in schools all over the state. Later, appeals will be made for financial help from other foundations and industry.

Indiana Pushes Lincoln Heritage



PAUSING FOR A MOMENT before the bust of Abraham Lincoln is Dale K'nman of Boy Scout Troop 151, Petersburg, Ind., who along with other scouts observed Lincoln's Birthday Saturday with a pilgrimage to the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial, Lincoln City, Ind. In addition to formal observations of the Lincoln's Birthday, there is a flurry of activity along the Lincoln Heritage Trail in preparation for the annual influx of pilgrims and tourists to Lincoln shrines in the Tri-State.

By HOMER ALLEY

The 157th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln took on a new and special meaning for residents of southwestern Indiana this year.

Never before in history has such an aggressive campaign been launched to call attention to the area where Lincoln spent his formative years.

The first real impact of the developments under construction will be felt this spring and summer when the thousands of pilgrims and tourists visit Lincoln shrines in the Tri-State.

Special ceremonies commemorating the birth of Lincoln were held throughout the area Saturday and today the date will be formally observed at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial at Lincoln City, Ind., starting at 2 p.m.

Arthur York, director of the Indiana Division of Tourism, will be main speaker.

The ceremony will take place amidst one of the major construction projects under way along the Indiana portion of the Lincoln Heritage Trail.

A new visitors center at the National Memorial is scheduled for completion May 23 and two residences for National Park Service personnel just west of the Nancy Hanks building will be finished in two weeks.

Albert Banton, memorial superintendent, reports the exhibit shelter near the site of the Lincoln Cabin is completed and exhibits will be placed there in the spring.

Last year, some 161,000 visitors registered at the Lincoln Boyhood Memorial, a gain of about 50 per cent over the previous year's total.

(over)

This year, even more are expected.

One of the reasons there will be more visitors to Lincoln City and other points along the trail will be national promotion of the Lincoln Heritage Trail through the Lincoln Heritage Trail Foundation, which opened

offices in Evansville last year.

According to Harry Baker, executive director of the foundation, a sizable portion of the budget has been committed to a national television program using Lincoln Trail Foundation film.

The show will be shown this spring at a time calculated to

best encourage the influx of tourists, Baker said.

Also aiding the tourism program in Southern Indiana is increased alertness to tourism by the state government as well as more money being spent on tourism, according to Baker.

With more to offer the tourists, such as accommodations, many thousands of extra dol-

lars would be spent in the state, Baker said.

Commercial enterprises along the trail will have more to offer this year.

The recently announced Lincoln Heritage Trail Farm on U.S. 41 north of Evansville will be dedicated Feb. 19. A lake has been dug at the farm and the erection of relocated log cabins is about to begin.

The planned \$2 million plus tourist-recreation complex near Haubstadt is being built by a group known as the Lincoln Trail Development Co. and is headed by Evansville advertising executive R. J. Atkins. The development will include rustic buildings, Lincoln exhibits, a riding stable, a stern-wheeler boat, and other attractions.

Undergoing a major expansion of facilities is the Lincoln State Park, just across Ind. 162 from the National Boyhood Memorial.

The park has expanded its camp sites from 200 last year to 300 this year and, according to Superintendent Charles Weber, another 100 camp sites may be added by July. Last July 4, 700 camp sites were needed when a record 3,500 campers descended on the park.

Ten family-size cabins are ready for their first full year of operation. The cabins were completed in July. The cabins house six people each, having living rooms and bathrooms and bunk and double beds.

A saddle barn has been added and horse trails are being cut and marked. Foot trails have been lengthened from six to 11 miles and the beach has been extended 200 feet.

Now pending are proposals to mark historical sites in the park and run trails to them.

It'll Be Plantin' Time Soon At Thomas Lincoln's Farm

By HOMER ALLEY

Ground has been cleared and it will soon be plantin' time at the Thomas Lincoln place. There'll be a corn patch on one plot and a small garden with potatoes, beans, pumpkins, sweet potatoes and squash on the other. Both will be handy to the cabin site.

"What we have in mind is a garden and crops like Thomas Lincoln had . . ." explained Don Standiford, historian at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial, Lincoln City, Ind.

The spring planting at the Lincoln Boyhood home is just one of numerous projects planned by the National Park Service, but is symbolic of the change that is taking place.

"What we are trying to do is to make a living memorial," Albert Banton, superintendent of the memorial, added.

IT'S ALL PART of a 14-year plan to give the park the atmosphere of 1816 — the environment in which Abe Lincoln grew up.

In addition to the subtle changes now beginning, drastic, expensive and impressive changes in visitor facilities have already taken place.

Repeat visitors to the

Lincoln Boyhood Memorial this spring won't immediately notice the change. Except for a new St. Meinrad stone walkway, nothing has changed in front of those famous sculptured stone panels.

But, behind them a revolution has taken place during the winter months.

THE NEW VISITOR'S center is now speeding toward completion and will be finished by May 23 as scheduled. The new visitor's center is being added to the rear of the Nancy Hanks Memorial building around the semi-circular cloister area which formerly served as a walkway. Cherry panelling and glass accent the interior of the new center which includes an exhibit area, rest rooms, offices for park personnel and an auditorium which will seat more than 100 persons.

Complete except for exhibits and some minor details is an exhibit shelter just north of the Nancy Hanks building and near the site of the Lincoln Cabin.

Two residences for Park Service personnel and a utility building have been completed.

BUT BEYOND these expensive and much publicized changes, are subtler changes that aim to bring the Lincoln heritage to all who visit his Boyhood home.

Currently, Banton and Standiford are looking for fence rails, non-hybrid seed corn, and strains of squash, potatoes, sweet potatoes and other vegetables which are as near the frontier varieties as possible.

So far, they have found two truck loads of fence rails, but they need more and will come get them if someone has them to donate to the memorial.

THE RETURN to the days of Thomas Lincoln will begin

with a few acres of corn.

During the next 14 years, the Lincoln place will be developed toward its appearance of 1816 as far as it is practical to do so. "We want the visitor to have a better understanding of the natural environment in which Lincoln developed," Banton said.

The 14-year plan calls for clearing the Lincoln trace which marked the south boundary of the Lincoln farm and eventual procurement of all the land which Thomas Lincoln owned after some buying, selling and trading in the Pigeon Creek area. Also in the planning is an archaeological dig for artifacts at the Lincoln Cabin site.

OTHER PLANS including moving the parking area from in front of the Memorial building and replacing it with a formal garden and possibly a reflecting pool. A new parking area would be constructed near the entrance to the grounds.

When will it all be done? "Never, I hope," said Banton. "I don't think we should ever get complacent about this. By the time the 14-year plan is completed, it'll be time for another look."

Lincoln Crafts Stressed at New Memorial

By LARRY MAY
Courier Staff Writer

LINCOLN CITY, Ind.—A tall, gangling boy of seven, tired after a long journey along wilderness trails, carrying family belongings because he was old enough to and a little extra because he was big enough to, came to the Indiana knoll selected by his father as the site of their future home.

For the next 14 years young Abraham Lincoln would live in a rude log cabin, acquiring the backwoods wisdom and developing a philosophy that would successfully carry him and a new nation through the dark hours of a bloody war.

The backwoods crafts that young Abe learned on the 180-acre farm — rail-splitting, crude farming and carpentry — engendered no love of labor in him. These crafts are being emphasized in a reconstruction of an 1816 farm at the place where young Abe dropped his pack and his body wearily, on that cold December day 152 years ago.

Archaeologists have carefully sifted the earth at the site, known from diaries, newspapers, old records and local legend, to try to help the National Park Service place the replica of the farmstead exactly where it stood during Lincoln's boyhood.

"The archaeologist couldn't precisely locate the old buildings," said Al Blanton, director of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial. "We used as a guide the fact ascertained from old records that the first cabin was 50 feet northwest of the cabin built later (called 'The Mansion')."

The Lincolns left no record of their farm layout, so the Park Service has used the historical method for grouping the cabin, smokehouse, barn, chickenhouse and corn crib, arranging them as they normally were on 1816 farms in Southern Indiana.

Blanton said the 1816 farm is one of several being constructed by the National Park Service throughout the country to preserve the historical development of farming in various sections of the country.

To equip the farm with the proper crops and tools, Blanton is scouring the countryside for seed of open-pollinated corn, cotton, dark-leaf tobacco, gourd, sunflower and hollyhock. He hopes to have these and other plants growing on the farm this summer.

He also is searching for a brindle cow, oxen, Spanish horses (a horse used for riding and work), a scythe and cradle, a broadaxe, a froe, a wooden single shovel plow and a sled, among other period implements.

Blanton said if the implements themselves can't be donated to the museum he can build replicas.

To re-construct the pioneer farm homestead, Blanton and his staff obtained log buildings from the Gentryville area, the Rockport area, Huntingburg area and the Jasper area. On Feb. 19, the crew began to clear the Lincoln homestead knoll and soon moved the logs — a few of which were 18 feet long, eight inches wide and two feet high — to the site. The longest logs

came from a double barn which actually was two barns separated by a driveway.

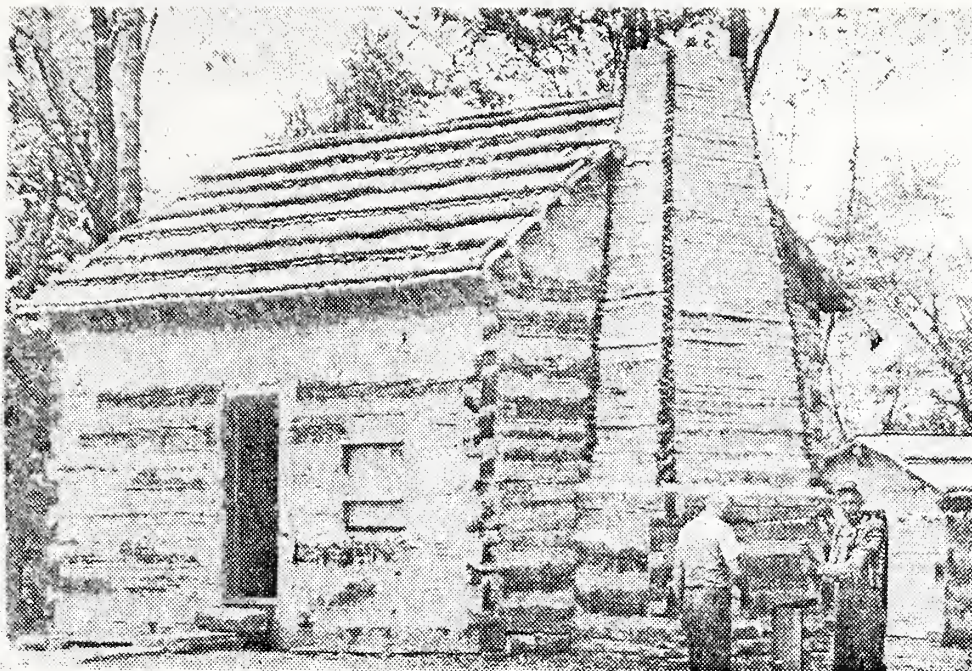
Using the old logs, making new shingles and their own daubing — a mixture of heavy red clay and cement — the crew completed the farmstead, down to wooden hinges for the doors. It will officially be open to the public on Memorial Day (May 30).

One of the workmen even carved a black oak stump into a seat and burned "Abe" into its back. The stump may or may not be a historical replica, but it is colorful, setting as it does between the house and smokehouse and providing a view across the knoll to verdant green hills through thick trees.

(A local legend is beginning

to grow around the stump. The story is that Sen. Robert Kennedy, campaigning in Indiana, stopped there as the workmen were celebrating the completion of the farmstead with a bean and cornstick supper. He accepted an invitation to the meal. After eating, Kennedy mounted the stump, and chopping away with a cornstick in his right hand, he made a brief speech.

Below the knoll where Abe once scuffed his toes in warm, summer dust and dreamed, the crew of workmen have been pulling stumps from bottom land, clearing new ground for a patch of corn where once Thomas and Abe dug, pushed, pulled and sweated to do the same chore with little more than broadaxes, prying poles and oxen.



Courier Photo

Homestead To Open: Elmer Stein (left) and Abner Crews of Lincoln City, Ind., split roofing shingles from a seasoned oak log. In the photo at top, the homestead which has been constructed by the Department of the Interior as a part of the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial can be seen. Opening date is slated for May 30, without formal ceremony.

Hoosiers stake claim on Lincoln heritage

From The Associated Press

Abe Lincoln may have been born in Kentucky and buried in Illinois, but he spent many of the years in between in southern Indiana.

As the nation celebrates Presidents Day today, two Hoosier historical groups continue to stake Indiana's claims to the Lincoln heritage.

"He spent a quarter of his life here," says Don Adams at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial near Lincoln City.

Adams is supervising park ranger at the southern Indiana site, where Lincoln lived from 1816 to 1830.

Lincoln, the nation's 16th president, was born in a log cabin in what is now Larue County, Ky. He spent most of his adult years in Illinois, where he is buried. In fact, Illinois calls itself the "Land of Lincoln."

After his father, Thomas Lincoln, ran into deed problems in Kentucky,

the family moved to Indiana and settled on Knob Creek.

It was in Indiana Lincoln learned to split logs, went to school and grew to his adult height of 6 feet 4.

"He lived here twice as long as he lived in Kentucky," said Mary Jane Hubler of the Louis A. Warren Lincoln Library and Museum in Fort Wayne. The library, funded by the Lincoln National Life Insurance Co., contains a vast amount of documentation on Lincoln's life, including 20,000 books.

Hubler said 500 books are what she called association books, "the same type of book that he would have read."

She says the library has every title Lincoln is known to have read and even some of his original volumes.

The Lincoln boyhood site is a recreation of a pioneer farm on the Indiana frontier.

Abe's boyhood farm could be strip mined

WASHINGTON (AP) — Abraham Lincoln's boyhood farm in southern Indiana is among a total of 1.7 million acres in national parks from Pennsylvania to Alaska that could be opened to strip mining under rule changes being considered by the Interior Department, a government memo contends.

The National Park Service sent the memo earlier in the month urging the Office of Surface Mining to drop a revision that park officials estimated could lead to opening 26 parks to coal strip mining.

Both agencies are in the Interior Department, where officials contend that the rule change is only one of several options being considered and no decision has been made yet.

However, environmentalists attacked the proposal last week.

"We are troubled that the agency would even consider an option that would permit development in the national parks given the repeated pledges by (Interior Secretary James) Watt that national parks will be off limits to development," said Norman Dean, attorney for the National Wildlife Federation.

The change is among a package of proposed revisions the Office of Surface Mining is considering to rules implementing the 1977 Surface Mining Control Act.

That law requires strip-mined land to be returned to its original contours. It also put national parks, forests and wildlife refuges off limits to strip mining. However, Congress granted an exception to that ban for persons holding rights to such mining before the 1977 law was passed.

The furor is over how to define a "valid existing right" as referred to in the law.

The park service is urging the surface mining office to adopt a definition that would require persons to have obtained all the permits necessary for mining at the time the law was passed.

Interior Department officials said the final decision on the mining proposal will not be made until mid-November.

The 26 park units include nine in Alaska; Allegheny Portage, Pa.; Big South Fork, Ky. and Tenn.; Bryce Canyon and Capitol Reef, Utah; Chaco Culture, N.M.; Cumberland Gap, Ky., Tenn. and Va.; Dinosaur, Colo. and Utah; Fort Necessity, Pa.; Fort Union Trading Post, N.D. and Mont.; Friendship Hills, Pa.; Glen Canyon, Ariz. and Utah; Johnstown Flood, Pa.; Knife River Indian Village, N.D.; Lincoln Boyhood, Ind.; New River Gorge, W.Va.; Obed Wild and Scenic River, Tenn.; and Theodore Roosevelt National Park, N.D.

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(April 1, 1988)

Contact: Patsy Bates
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LIVING HISTORICAL FARM OPENS

(LINCOLN CITY, INDIANA) The National Park Service and Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial have announced the opening of the Lincoln Living Historical Farm for the 1988 season. Hours of operation this year will be from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily (CST) beginning Sunday, April 17.

Visitors from all over the world visit Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial to learn about the nationally and internationally celebrated figure, Abraham Lincoln. They learn here that Lincoln was a frontier boy and young man much like many others of his time. Here he worked and played, developed manual skills, read books, shared a family life, earned his first dollar, and experienced love and tragedy.

Daily through the visitor season, costumed interpreters at the farm illustrate pioneer domestic arts and crafts, frontier farming methods, and other activities connected with pioneer life. Visitors will find men and wimminfolk doing the same things the Lincolns did when they lived here. Each day there are a number of chores that have to be done, such as chopping firewood, feeding the animals, and milking the cow. Throughout the season, activities such as cooking, sewing, splitting rails, riving shingles, and spinning wool and flax are performed by the men and women on the farm.

State adding 180 acres to Lincoln State Park

by Lesley Weidenbener

By Jesse Wilson
TheStatehouseFile.com

INDIANAPOLIS – Lincoln State Park in Southern Indiana will be expanding its total size by 180 acres thanks to the Bicentennial Nature Trust.

A dedication including Gov. Mike Pence will take place Wednesday at the park. The celebration will include a mile long hike called "Walk A Mile With Mike" in which participants will walk and talk with the governor.

"Abraham Lincoln spent his formative years right here in Spencer County," Pence said in a statement. "Reflecting on his monumental contributions to our state and nation, I think it's a fitting tribute that we set aside this land he knew as a boy in honor of our state's Bicentennial Celebration."

The park – already 1,747 acres – will gain land both to the west and south of the park as well as adding a mile of new hiking trails.

"This addition to Lincoln State Park underlines the 2016 Bicentennial Commission's commitment to nature conservation in Indiana," said former Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman.

Skillman and former U.S. Rep. Lee Hamilton are the co-chairs of the Bicentennial Commission, which oversees the Bicentennial Nature Trust.

First lady Karen Pence is the ambassador to the commission.

"We look forward to hearing and celebrating many more success stories for the Bicentennial Nature Trust in the months and years to come," Hamilton said.

Former Gov. Mitch Daniels launched the Bicentennial Nature Trust using \$20 million in state funds and \$10 million from the Lilly Endowment. The goal is to expand trails, conservation areas and recreation sites.

So far, the commission has approved 59 projects and 19 have been completed for a total of 2,591 acres.

Jesse Wilson is a reporter for TheStatehouseFile.com, a news website powered by Franklin College journalism students.

Traveling to explore Lincoln's Indiana boyhood

The Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial and Lincoln State Park, across Highway 162 from each other in Indiana, are windows into young Abraham Lincoln's world.



By Kathryn Lemmon

February 7, 2014, 4:24 p.m.

Near twenty years have passed away

Since here I bid farewell

To woods and fields, and scenes of play,

And playmates loved so well....

From "My Childhood Home I See Again," by Abraham Lincoln, 1846

LINCOLN CITY, Ind. — Abe Lincoln would be gratified to see the place he once called home, which remains largely unchanged from his youth. Is it in Kentucky? Illinois?

Neither.

When you read about the country's 16th president, you'll find frequent references to his "passing through" Indiana. Should 14 years of his life be characterized as "passing through"? I think not. In fact, Lincoln spent his formative years in Indiana, my home state, before moving in 1830 to Illinois, which calls itself the Land of Lincoln.

But Indiana played a big role in the man he would become. Seeking a new life in a place free of slavery and title disputes, Thomas Lincoln, Abe's father, moved the family north from Kentucky in December 1816 when Abe was a boy of 7 and just as Indiana was becoming the 19th state in the Union.

It was here in southwestern Indiana (now Spencer County) that Abe worked the land with his father and mastered fence making (among other skills), earning him the nickname the Rail-Splitter. He said later that he had achieved his height (6 feet, 4 inches) on the good soil of Indiana.

The National Park Service commemorates the future president's time here with its Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial, three hours south of Indianapolis or about two hours west of Louisville, Ky., and Indiana honors him with neighboring Lincoln State Park.

Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial

In more than half a dozen visits to Lincoln's boyhood memorial, I've always found it quiet and thus ideal for contemplating a man whose humble beginnings belie the complexity of his character.

The exterior of the visitor center illustrates phases of Lincoln's life with five limestone sculptures, carved from solid 10-ton blocks from Indiana quarries and depicting his childhood years and onward to his death. When I see those stones, it seems to me that Lincoln is like them: solid, unbreakable, enduring.

The visitor center has a short orientation film (narrated by Leonard Nimoy) about Lincoln's time in Indiana, and a small museum houses a Thomas Lincoln cabinet — he was a skilled carpenter — hearth stones from a Lincoln cabin and Lincoln-related art work, including an oil representing how mother Nancy Hanks Lincoln may have looked.

She died two years after the Lincolns moved to southern Indiana, felled by what was known as milk sickness, the result of ingesting dairy products from cows that had eaten the white snakeroot plant. She is buried on the grounds not far from the visitor parking area. Oak and hickory trees shade the cemetery. Visitors — I was one — show their respect by leaving pennies at the base of her headstone, which are collected and used to help pay for the park's upkeep.

North of her grave is the Lincoln Living Historical Farm, a re-creation that depicts a typical farm of Lincoln's day. A barn, chicken coop and other outbuildings sit near the tiny cabin. The delight is in such details as the marmalade cat dozing on the quilt rack (although Lincoln may have been a dog person —

friends recalled that he had a four-legged pal named Honey). Staff members don period clothing for daily demonstrations of pioneer life: cooking over an open fire, gardening, quilt-making, milking cows and more.

The farm is open seven days a week from April to October. You can walk among the buildings at other times, but you might see only chickens and sheep.

Lincoln State Park

The 1,747-acre Lincoln State Park is just across Highway 162 from the boyhood memorial. Its outdoor enticements — swimming, fishing, hiking and camping — are reminiscent of young Abe's pursuits: Along 10 miles of trails you can walk stride for stride with a future president.

If your explorations take you near the Little Pigeon Creek Baptist Church while you're in the park, you can visit the grave of Abe's older sister, Sarah Lincoln Grigsby, who died during childbirth in January 1828 at the age of 21. Her stillborn child was buried in her arms.

To help visitors understand the historical context, a stage production of Lincoln's life, called "A. Lincoln: A Pioneer Tale" is presented in the 1,500-seat amphitheater.

When Abe starts constructing a coffin for his mother, the scene is so heart-wrenching that you may reach for your tissues. But the production, billed as a musical outdoor drama, isn't all sorrow. There's singing, there's dancing and there are boyish pranks, and the stage is large enough to accommodate horses, wagons and small riverboats. Thanks to the roof, the show can go on rain or shine. (The theater is also home to a variety of other shows and special events, from concerts to Shakespeare.)

The theater is a good place to reflect about leadership. Americans embraced Lincoln, a common man, one who knew about hardships and how to overcome them, and made him our president, considered one of our best. His time here surely toughened him, but it also helped to prepare him to govern through one of the most tumultuous periods of U.S. history. Were it not for his Indiana boyhood, who knows how America's story would have turned out?

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